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**NOTES OF THE WEEK.**

Parliament has risen, and the King's Speech, with its determined ring, chimes well with the King's assent to the Military Service Bill. The Government, once having set its face to the task, has never looked back, and the Bill has been rattled through both houses in great style. We are not going to grumble over what has been done to it during its passage—though we quite agree that the complaints of both Lord Derby and Lord Middleton in the debate in the House of Lords were well founded. We are not going to grumble because here is 50 per cent. of what we have asked for till our voice has cracked and throat grown dry. And 50 per cent. in these days is a good instalment—many holders, even of gilt-edged securities, hardly expect to see more of their money than that just now! The Government have done well, surprisingly well, in this business; and the best opinion seems to be that they have distinctly strengthened their position. The Act has been carried through with a great deal of tactical skill. The Old Parliamentary Hand himself might have admired the business.

Such tactics were advisable and necessary in the present instance. It must be borne in mind that the feeling against compulsory or obligatory military service in this country was extraordinarily bitter. It was an obsession; and—absurd though it seems to reasonable minds—it was far harder to get the advanced section of the Radical party to go into compulsion than it was to get them to go into the war. Hence to have gone at it like a bull at a gate would only have served to delay it still longer. Now, however, that the thing is done, and the principle secured—for, of course, everyone knows that the principle has been secured, though we may be told it is not the very pink of politeness to say so!—Ministers will be able to go ahead. There ought to be an end to apologetics and pledges henceforth. The one thing now is to break Germany.

Most of the men who come under the Act will sign in before the named day; they will, we apprehend, come in much as they did at the end of the Derby group crusade. A certain proportion of weaklings, mixed with some thoroughly "bad ones", may hold out after the day. But to rebel openly against compulsion in military service when the Bill is law is quite another thing than rebelling against compulsion in the workshops. The terrible slur of physical cowardice attaches to the former. We suggest that the provincial Press throughout the country would do a true service to the young men by pointing out this distinction.

It is highly important that there should be no irresponsible talk about the men who will now come in under the Act wanting courage and so forth. These men will make as good soldiers as the country wants. They will be as keen as any, and in half a year's time many of them will be winning medals for their work in the trenches. We hate comparisons which pretend that the man who joined in December 1914 is a poor specimen compared with the man who joined in August 1914; or that the man who joined in August 1915 was "not a patch" on the man who joined in March 1915. They are mostly false and superficial comparisons and very ungenerous.

There was a feature about the concluding debates in the Commons on the Military Service Bill—a feature reflected in the comment on the Bill by those No-Conscription journals in London that have come to heel—which is by no means altogether satisfactory: namely, the smooth and polite way in which the measure was finally carried. Each side was rather too ready to say sugary things of the other. This spirit is admirably reflected in the "Westminster Gazette", which supports the Bill and yet seems to be blowing kisses all the while to Sir John Simon. To read the "Westminster Gazette", indeed, one might suppose that Sir John Simon was little short of a guardian angel of the measure in disguise. The "Westminster" coos to him in the most loving

manner. The whole thing might be not inaptly described as Simoniacal-Spenderism.

It is all very sweet, no doubt, but some of us prefer something rather more rough and wholesome. This war is not going to be won by a policy of blowing kisses to our bitter opponents; and the people who try to kill the Bill—without which we cannot get the men with which to smash the vile power of Germany and relieve the poor fellows in the trenches—are not the people we ought to bill and coo to, and that sort of thing. We are not going over in a nice little party to Berlin to take lunch with the Kaiser and be flattered with his condescension and fine fare; and we are not, therefore, in a blow-kiss mood. In the judgment of the plain man the people who voted against the Military Service Bill are, one and all, better friends to Germany than to the British Empire. And we have a shrewd notion that this opinion will be shared by most people who are really out to win the war. Assuredly it will be largely shared by the loyal people of Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Canada.

One word more on the "Westminster Gazette" and we will leave it. This organ keeps harping away on the string that the compulsion which has been at last rammed home is merely a question of "expediency", not of principle. The "Westminster Gazette"—as out-and-out Radicals very well know!—always worships at the shrine of "expediency". It was expedient to cultivate Germany just before the war. It was expedient to set forth on joy parties to Berlin and lunch with the Kaiser. It was expedient to offer him naval half holidays. It was expedient not to have compulsion before the war. It was expedient to declare against compulsion up to almost, not quite, the last moment. After which it was expedient to go in with the crowd. It is expedient to-day to whittle away the figures showing that Germany is getting food through neutral countries, just as it was expedient a year ago or thereabouts to announce that Germany was hungry. We have little doubt it will ere long be expedient to discover that these figures are not such bad figures, after all. Was it not Disraeli who once said of Peel that his life was "One Great Appropriation Clause"? And of the "Westminster Gazette" might not one say that it is One Great Expediency Clause?

Labour has had many things to say to the Service Bill this week, but these things are all at sixes and sevens. The total result is that Labour, so far as the best and most responsible part of it—and so far as the great mass of it—is concerned is not going to work up a rebellion against the Act. There is, as we confidently anticipated, no real danger of a traitorous down-tools move against an Act without which we should simply be compelled to cave in to Germany. The patriotic section of the Labour Party has proved altogether too strong for the No-Conscriptionists, and Mr. Henderson and his supporters have, in reality, got completely the upper hand. It must be admitted we owe much to this powerful and patriotic wing. The country will not forget its services; any more than it will forget the great work, simply and sincerely carried through, by Lord Derby.

An elderly woman in a very short skirt was standing by the gates of Charing Cross station the other day, distributing to passers-by a poisonous leaflet about "Conscription". A soldier, fresh from the front, came out of the station and the woman offered him one of her leaflets against the Military Service Bill. He took it, glanced at it, flung it to the ground, and stamped on it with a boot still splashed with the mud of the trenches. That is the only way to treat such poisonous stuff when handed about by a woman. But when a man hands it about, what should be done then? We think we know what most soldiers fresh from the front with mud-splattered boots will reply. These traitorous No-Conscriptionists in our midst must be stamped out somehow.

Sir E. Grey's speech on Wednesday ended upon a harder note of warning to neutrals than had yet been uttered by the British Government. His speech, all through, rested upon a clear assumption that the Allies had every right to carry out a programme of strangulation, and it indicated a set resolve that the grip of the British Fleet should be as hard and fast as it could be made without open offence and injustice to the neutral Powers. Here Sir E. Grey joined issue unmistakably with the terms of the last American Note. There are things in the American Note which would make it impossible for us to prevent goods going wholesale through neutral countries to Germany. The American Note virtually requires us to cease distinguishing on suspicion between *bona-fide* neutral trade and masked trade with Germany. If a neutral nation denies our right so to distinguish, it cannot be regarded. "I must say that if neutral countries were to take that line it would be a departure from neutrality."

These are clear and definite words. It would seem that the Government has stiffened on this question as a result of the evidence now available of the serious leakage of trade into Germany. We have yet to give some turns to the screw. The "farcical figures" are a proof of the need. The ingenuity of the enemy may drive us to harder measures yet, such as the strict rationing of neutral markets, before his secret commerce is unmasked and throttled. Meantime the United States also requires an answer as to the mail question. Sir E. Grey reserves his reply till he has consulted the Allied Governments.

Lord Robert Cecil, in the concluding speech to this debate, uttered some witty truth concerning committees. There are too many committees. Indeed, one committee is too many committees in a time of war. His fellow-countrymen may love to be ruled by twenty-two men; but Lord Robert "hated and loathed" committees. "The first thing any body of Englishmen did when they wanted to get something done was to form a committee, then a council, and perhaps a grand council, none of which were of the slightest use, and would be much better suppressed, leaving the whole organisation to any one member of the committee." Nothing could be better than this.

The War Trade Department published on Tuesday some corrections to the blockade figures lately published in the "Daily Mail" and the "Morning Post". We must allow that the Government, in point of scholarship, holds the field. They have better material and a staff of experts. Obviously a newspaper which takes up any question as intricate as the questions involved in these figures is at a disadvantage. The Government has made—as it was bound to make—some shrewd debating and statistical hits at the expense of the "Daily Mail" and the "Morning Post". But these debating and statistical hits do not dispose of the matter. The "Daily Mail" and the "Morning Post" have done a public service in bringing this question to the front. They have ventured more or less darkly towards the truth. They had not, and could not have, the whole truth at their disposal. But they put down one half of it, and thereby they compelled the War Trade Department to put down the other half.

There has been heavy fighting in the West, and the offensive has been with the Germans. Last Sunday they claimed that an attack near Neuville had taken about 270 yards of French advanced trench; and two days later, just east of Neuville, they made another attack, after exploding some mines and searching the trenches with a heavy bombardment. The Germans got into the mine-craters, but the rest of the story is confused. Berlin declares that they held the craters, capturing three machine-guns and more than 100 prisoners, and that "the French counter-attacks collapsed at the very beginning". Paris



affirms that "the greater part of the mine-craters were retaken almost immediately". Meantime the German offensive has dwindled into a fierce cannonade, accompanied by the explosion of more mines.

Fifty-two days have passed since General Townshend was shut up in the fortress of Kut, as years ago he was isolated at Chitral. He is confident, and has enough supplies, but his position causes anxiety; in part because of his wounded, and partly because of the weather, which delays the relieving force under General Aylmer. Also the Turks are in force. Who can imagine in full the wonderful courage which has been shown under the most trying conditions both by General Aylmer's troops and by those in Kut? There have been great inundations and terrific storms, and the climate tends to sap the health of European soldiers.

It appears from further communications published on Thursday that the recent fighting on the Tigris took place twenty-three miles below Kut-el-Amara and not seven miles from Kut, as previously stated in this country. The mistake arose through a misunderstanding at the India Office of references in the telegrams to the Es Sinn position, which was known to be strongly entrenched. According to a Turkish report, General Aylmer's force suffered heavy losses and was obliged to fall back several kilometres. Another British relief column is said to have been attacked at Kurna, over 200 miles below Kut. Our own reports say that General Aylmer's fight on the 21st was a fierce one; it continued all day in atrocious weather, with varying results; no details of the casualties have yet been received, but they are said to be very heavy.

There is no change in the position at Salonika. Meanwhile 50,000 German troops are reported to have reached Constantinople for the purpose of upholding the authority of Enver. The Austrians hold a large part of the interior of Montenegro and the whole coastline. Also they are passing over Albania from the north and east. Skutari has been captured and San Giovanni di Medua; Berat has fallen to the enemy, who menace now the Italian force at Avlona; and Durazzo is threatened from the east. But the counter-stroke will come.

A correspondent of the "Daily Mail" was present at the famous banquet to the Kaiser at Nish given by the King of Bulgaria. The Kaiser coughed incessantly; he looked old and tired—a broken man, and thus a great contrast to "the massive figure of the hawk-nosed King Ferdinand, who has a curious, duck-like waddle". General von Falkenhayn—the Chief of the German General Staff—was present at this banquet, a trim man, alert in movement, and full of vigour, vivacity, and virility.

It has been a week of air raids. On 23 January, by moonlight, a hostile aeroplane dropped nine bombs in rapid succession on "the East Coast of Kent", causing some damage to private property and killing a man. Three children were wounded, together with a woman and two men. Towards midday two enemy seaplanes visited the same locality, and, though they did no damage, they got away in safety, pursued by our naval and military machines. On the 24th, at 4 p.m., a German seaplane passed over Dover; two British machines followed it, but it made its escape.

On the 23rd a squadron of forty French aeroplanes left Salonika at 7 a.m. and flew in two divisions to Monastir and Ghevgeli. The distance to Monastir is about 100 miles, and it was covered in about 90 minutes. No fewer than 204 projectiles were dropped on the enemy's camps, on the building occupied by the Bulgarian Headquarters Staff, and on other military points. The attackers suffered no loss, though a heavy gale of wind blew on their flank, and though they passed over mountains 6,000 feet high. In the

West, too, there have been big air raids—French, British, and German. During the last four weeks on the Western front we have lost thirteen machines and brought down nine German aeroplanes. But far more British aeroplanes venture over the German lines than German aeroplanes over the British lines.

The Mile End figures are distinctly a warning to the Government of the deep uneasiness of the ordinary public concerning the defences of London. That Mr. Billing should have polled so highly against the full resources of the party machine, including the intervention of the First Lord of the Admiralty himself, argues a rising temper in the electors. The deputation of London members which on Thursday waited upon Lord Kitchener and Mr. Balfour was quite usefully reassured. We are given to understand the old lack of anti-aircraft materials and the deficiency in defensive machines are being made up. This statement of the authorities may do something to dispel the suspicions of neglect which have arisen in the public mind. We now more definitely expect that the defences of London will be discovered in better trim when next they are required.

The Mile End result was achieved despite the fact that the best interests of the fourth arm were not conspicuously well served by Mr. Pemberton Billing's conduct of his campaign. If he was reported aright in the version of his speech sent to Mr. Balfour, he deliberately intended to suggest to the electors that the Admiralty cared nothing for the East End. Only when the West End was attacked by the Zeppelins did the Government really begin to bestir itself. This poisonous trash deserved every syllable of Mr. Balfour's severe rebuke.

Lord Milner was speaking this week at Leeds on a subject which presses more and more upon the public mind as the war wears on. The closer union of the Empire is not a vision: it is a fact. The war has banded Great Britain with the Dominions in spirit and idea. It now remains only to find the machinery whereby this closer union is to be expressed. This will have to be found immediately upon the close of the war, for several reasons. Not the least pressing reason will be our instant need to organise our resources against the aggressive trade campaigns of Germany.

The Government is now dealing with the serious position of our shipping. First, there are the new restrictions upon imports. The prohibition of the importation of wood-pulp, building materials, hard woods, etc., has for its object the saving of tonnage and space in our ships. It is an agreed measure—agreed, that is, with the interests chiefly affected. Of these the Press is the most greatly concerned, and it has loyally made no difficulties whatever. Even more important than this restriction of imports is the appointment of a committee to co-ordinate and supervise the work of all those bodies which are controlling and distributing the carrying resources of our marine. At the head of this committee is Lord Curzon, who, at last, has a definite post of service assigned to him. It is an arduous post to which there is little glamour; but it will usefully exercise Lord Curzon's great ability, and it is a post which, amid the jangle of many counsels and interests, needs a strong man. This appointment will greatly reassure the public.

An admirable leaflet has been prepared by the Research Defence Society on the results of inoculation in the Expeditionary Forces. These results are striking, and their circulation is an act of public service. This leaflet, moreover, explains the processes set up by inoculation in so clear and simple a fashion that the distrust, natural or caught by infection from crank societies, of those who are inclined to refuse it should be finally overcome. This leaflet should be widely distributed. It can be obtained for circulation from Mr. Stephen Paget (21 Ladbrooke Square, W.).

## LEADING ARTICLES.

## HOW NOT TO WIN THE WAR.

"It has long been a grave question whether any Government not too strong for the liberties of its people can be strong enough to maintain its existence in great emergencies."

THIS saying of a great man—Abraham Lincoln of the United States—is entirely apposite to-day; and unless the profound truth that lives in it is taken to heart by rulers and ruled alike in this country we shall not win the war against the Central European Powers.

It is time to bring back people to the real bed-rock facts of the war, to the actual position. The enemy has failed to destroy or capture any of the main armies which he has been at grips with and flung back in eighteen months of war, and he has been completely swept off the seas except for a few submarines, and—at one end of the Adriatic—for some Austrian cruisers perhaps. But, on the other hand, he has achieved great military feats in Poland, Belgium, and the Balkans, and really beyond the dispute of sane people he has had the best of it so far on land. It would be merely silly to question this, or to cry out against it as "pessimism" or as "heartening the enemy"; for no honest man with the least military instinct, or, let us say, with a modicum of common-sense, can be found to deny or doubt it for a moment. Denying or doubting it, we merely play the fool in exactly the same way that a large number of Germans play the fool at times when they pretend they are sweeping the North Sea and searching vainly for the British Fleet in order to give it battle! This kind of thing is even less wise than the ostrich sticking its head in the sand—it is the ostrich pretending to stick its head into the sand whilst all the while it is looking up sidewise to observe its opponent, and knowing quite well that its pretence is perfectly obvious to that opponent and everyone else on the scene.

With all the worst of it, then, by sea, the enemy has had all the best of it by land; and caution drives one to admit that the prospects of the coming mighty campaigns at the close of winter and the start of spring are by no means so rosy as sleepy-heads and easy-going people in this country are assuring and reassuring each other. It is true we are going to have a much larger army ere long; and we are at length getting on with the business of munitions after a drawn-out period of painful muddling—owing partly to labour difficulties which were acute more than a year ago, and partly to an entirely well-meant but, unhappily, a woefully inept Munitions Act some eight months ago. However, here we are at the close of January getting into a distinctly better position as regards our supply of men and munitions at home. This is all to the good, and we can fairly congratulate each other on the marked improvement. Also we may all reasonably agree that it is not a case of too late: it is a case of late—no worse than this. But there is another side to the picture. We are most distinctly not the only Power which is making ready to call up and put far larger armies into the field against the expected huge spring campaign of 1916. The enemy, too, is known to be making colossal preparations against that struggle; and among the Powers that are preparing to call up an immense number of men on whom it has not yet drawn is, we believe, Austria: the same Austria which, according to those credulous people who per-

sist in styling themselves "Optimists"—the last thing in the world they really are—was from a military standpoint "decimated", "annihilated" and substantially done for about a year and a quarter ago. Austria, unless we are very much misinformed, has by no means reached anything like the limit of her fighting man material yet: indeed, it is reckoned by those who on the spot have made a close and long study of her resources that she is better placed in this than Germany, partly because she has hitherto drawn less drastically on her man strength and partly because she is not supplying nearly so huge a quantity of munitions.

It is quite conceivable, in short, that the enemy as a whole may be able to put something like twelve million men into the field in the forthcoming campaigns. To crush the opposition, and finally to disarm the opposition, which such armies imply, will be a tremendous task. And to carry through that task there is not the smallest doubt that Great Britain will have to lay at least as heavy a hand on "the liberties of the people" as President Lincoln had in his mind when he spoke the words quoted above.

The way not to win this war—the way that can only lead to a half-victory or a muddled draw, to a settlement which will not settle—is to defer to this and that body of opinion: to resort continually to all sorts of expedients and delicately adjusted compromises.

The way not to win the war is to be fearful of wounding the sensibilities of this group which cries out against dilution of labour; that group which will not hear of public expenditure being cut down so far as education, rates, land valuations, insurance, and a score of other things are concerned; and of a third group which exclaims that never, never, must we go one inch farther than we have gone in the undemocratic, alarming, and unpopular direction of compulsion.

The way not to win the war is to seek out incessantly—whilst a Satanically efficient and murderous enemy is concentrating against us—some middle way of action which will more or less suit everybody; to fear friction or an outcry of sensitives at home as if it were more fatal than a poison gas attack or a heavy defeat by the enemy abroad. But this is just the way this country is in danger of to-day. "Nothing must be done except what the people want to do"; "We must on no account drive the British people—they will stand anything but driving"; "On no account must our National Unity be endangered"—there is far too much of this kind of shrinking sentimentalism about; and it appeals too much to some of our statesmen. In the early days of the Coalition it was necessary: the two wings of the Government would not have coalesced without it. Also, to get our long and anxiously awaited instalment of compulsory military service it was necessary to manage or pet this section and that. The country had to be led or enticed by little half-inches at a time to the brink of compulsory military service and then pushed in. In this way only could be secured the Bill which, we rejoice to say, passed through Parliament this week—the infinitely best week in eighteen months of war so far as home efforts go. But now that we have established the splendid principle that men of military age, whether they desire it or no, are bound to defend their country in peril—and can be called up when the State chooses—the need no longer exists for tentative compromises and fearful expedients; nor does the need exist for the Govern-



ment to apologise, and explain that they will never, never do it again, and that it is a very little baby after all, etc. Effective war—and nothing but ruthlessly effective war can avail us against Germany—can never be apologetics and half-measures, as President Lincoln knew, and speedily caused democracy in America to know. To save the liberties of the British people the State must now step in firmly and take from the licence of that people. We agree with what "Vieille Moustache" and Major-General Sir Alfred Turner so often and ably urge, out of their great experience, in the SATURDAY REVIEW. To beat the Germans this country has got to "plug in" with all its might at home as well as abroad. Ministers must make up their minds to take off the kid gloves and go in with knuckle-dusters. To continue in a course of apologetics and pledges can have only one end: it will lose us the war.

#### THE "CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR."

A NEW alliance of an offensive character is being formed, as an offset against the use of compulsion in recruiting. We assume that the Simple Simons have been annexed unwillingly to this alliance, for they are not foolish enough to unite themselves with the Stop-the-War fanatics. There are degrees of stupidity in "conscientious objection", and the Simple Simons have not yet qualified for all degrees. Their aim is to be a non-political sect, as exclusive as a new order of monks; and they intend to watch the Service Bill in operation, to oppose any attempt to extend the principle of compulsion, and to flirt with those invertebrate peace-bred tenets that help a Coalition Government to compromise. They are likely to do a great deal of harm, but they wish to do it in a Constitutional manner, so that they may look the Speaker in the face without feeling ashamed of themselves. Zeal has not yet divorced them from the hospitable etiquette of Parliament.

But the other "conscientious objectors" are so eager to be reinforced that they regard the Simple Simons as their kith and kin. Sir John Simon should consider this fact before putting new follies into his campaign. Meantime the Government should remember that their action five months ago against the National Labour Press, Ltd., was a mere flash in the pan, and that opposition to the war has become since then a public danger. Far too much liberty has been allowed to mischievous cranks leagued into societies.

In a time of perilous war the liberty that citizens need is liberty to defend the common good from evil influences, whether foreign or home-bred. Members of Parliament should be responsible for their words and actions to their constituencies, and writers on current affairs should be loyal to their position of public trust and influence. Mr. Harold Cox says on this point: "If Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and others who are using their position in the National Council to oppose the nation's cause were paid by their constituents, they could be effectively reminded of their obligations to the people who placed them in Parliament. As matters stand, they continue to draw payment from the nation, and the only work they do in return is work which the nation does not want done."

But the matter does not end here. Parliament has failed to censure those of its members who toy with dangerous illusions; and this wrong lenience towards professional politicians has given daily and hourly encouragement to those lazy invertebrates who strive to discredit the cause for which the Allies fight. These libertines of freedom have what is known as "a soft job". They are guarded by the Army and Navy, and the State lets them alone. Though more than 120,000 men have died in battle, yet any fool that calls himself a "conscientious objector" is free to prolong the war by running counter to a policy of efficiency. It is not

regarded as treason to plead for a peace that would give victory to the Germans. Soldiers are getting angry with the men who try to raise public opinion against the war. Several meetings have been broken up by soldiers; it is time for the Government to review the position carefully.

A nation of soldiers in a time of necessary war is insulted by the cranks who ask for peace. The insult has lasted too long: it must be stopped. It has a greater effect to-day on feeble minds than it had on them a few months ago, so that "conscientious objectors" have increased in number. To-day they are strong enough to weaken the moral fibre of the nation. Like all zealots, they look upon themselves as the only moral persons in the country, and would be glad to idolise themselves as martyrs. Conscience has forsaken them, for they misuse the safety which has been won for them by the killed and wounded. When they talk of conscience they try to protect their pernicious zeal from useful and necessary discipline.

In one respect these fanatics are unassailable. Not only do they make a great parade of their religion, but they know that tolerance in religion is a necessary principle of statesmanship in an Empire that grants just freedom to many different religious creeds and sects. A cry of "Religious Persecution", already raised in some quarters, is an evil that cannot be feared too much by Imperialists. "Conscientious objectors" trade upon this consideration, forgetting that their dangerous influence in a time of war can be limited without any harm being done to the principle of religious tolerance. Their public meetings can be—and should be—forbidden as inimical to the realm's defence, and as openly disloyal to our Allies. But what they would feel most of all is a steady attack by statesmen and journalists on the "morality" that they claim for their conduct. Consider two outstanding facts:

1. During peace the conscientious objector, while advertising his determination never to protect his native land in a war, thrives under the Army and Navy and pays taxes to support his defenders.

2. At the present time he increases this immorality, for men by the thousands die for him, yet he remains in the British Isles and acts in many ways as a friend to Germany. The man who declines to fight in a most perilous war, yet lives in a country where adequate defence is essential to national safety, is a "conscientious" humbug, a "conscientious" sneak. He hires neighbours to fight for him instead of emigrating to some land or other where he could live honourably with his "ideals".

Many Quakers since August 1914 have recognised the falseness of their position, and have come forward to help their country. It is custom, not conscience, that enables so many persons to receive the benefits of war while declining to be either soldiers or sailors. Add to custom the vanity of zealots, and the stop-the-war movement is explained. But another thing of equal importance stands in need of explanation. A steady official tenderness has been shown towards the objectors who prate about conscience. No plain truths have been told to them about their immoral position. Again and again they have been flattered in public speeches, as if there were something noble in the act of evading the dangers of war while receiving the safety won and kept by battles. It is time for the Government to understand that soldiers and sailors, like other patriots, are tired of the unfair clemency which has given far too much public freedom to hysterical cranks. The public has been provoked overmuch by German devilries. Why permit other provocations to come from home-bred fools and lunatics?

#### BLOCKADING THE ENEMY.

THERE is one thing, at least, to the good as to the state of the present controversy regarding blockade. The whole question has now been raised

high above the level on which it was debated by the contrabandists and the starvation critics of last summer. Six months ago the outcry against the Government in the matter of enemy trade was almost entirely ignorant. Words were flung about without any real knowledge of their meaning. The public was invited to look upon this difficult question as though it were just a simple matter of saying that Germany should be starved, and of then and there setting about the business with a cordon of ships and orders to view. So far as the public derived any idea at all from the fierce speeches of the contrabandists, it took the form of supposing that our sailors were being required by the Foreign Office to allow all kinds of things to pass directly into the hands of the enemy. The Government, it was assumed, could easily prevent it; but, for some curious reason, they neglected, it was said, to do so.

The new campaign, which has reached a period this week in the statement of Sir E. Grey to the House of Commons, has been quite a different affair. It began with a realisation that the system of agreement with neutrals, practised for many months by the Government, was far from being as strict or as successful a system as a large proportion of the intelligent public had imagined. It was obviously allowing vast quantities of material to pass to the enemy. There was a constant and a serious leakage; and the public was entirely in the dark as to what was being done to check it. Since the summer of 1914 the public has educated itself to realise very clearly the extreme difficulty and complexity of the problem. There has been little or no shouting of sesame or abracadabra or of any magic cry to cure simply and at once an obvious ill. The word "blockade" is not being misused as the word "contraband" was misused. What the public desired was a statement of policy and of results. Was the Government too sensitive of the rights of neutrals, too respectful of international phrases, too liberal to the lavishly trading non-belligerents whose nests are being so warmly feathered against the storm of war? What had become of Mr. Asquith's undertaking that no imports or exports should knowingly pass in or out of Germany? How could we reconcile this statement with our public knowledge that the Danish agreement expressly allows certain foodstuffs to pass into Germany by common consent?

There is here no question of a contrived agitation either of the Press or of any group of over-sanguine advisers. The uneasiness exists, and it has asked for facts. The publication of facts, such as lay at the disposal of the Press, recently became a public service. Naturally these facts were not—they could not possibly be—proof against a critical and scholarly examination by experts who have been handling these matters with special knowledge for months past. The staff of a newspaper, however ably manned, cannot hope to compete with a Department of State in a technical and expert matter. Consequently when the figures appeared, notably in the "Daily Mail" and the "Morning Post", it was comparatively easy for the War Trade Department to riddle them with small-shot corrections. No one imagined—least of all the newspapers which boldly set out to search the Government in this matter—that the "Daily Mail" and "Morning Post" figures represented the whole truth of the case. They no more represented the whole truth than Mr. Runciman's confident speeches as to the bad condition and ultimate ruin of Germany represented the whole truth. These figures simply put the case for enquiry, and they succeeded in their object. The correcting figures of the War Trade Department have undoubtedly helped to clear the air, and they would never have been published had it not been for the publication of opposition figures in the Press. The proof of this is found in the fact that the Department figures are strictly confined to the business of correction. No more information is contained in them than is necessary to put the critics of the Government in the wrong.

The self-righteous and indignant adversaries of the

"Daily Mail" and the "Morning Post" have made a merry use of the powder and shot so liberally supplied to them by the War Trade Department. They have never been so happy since they celebrated a free and spontaneous uprising of the people. The "farfical figures" have been turned this way and that: all the errors in classification and arithmetic lingered upon with an enviable relish. The public will be better occupied in noting that the "farfical figures" are not all farce. They justify the action of the militant Press in publishing them better than they justify the action of their adversaries in skittling them.

Sir E. Grey spoke on Wednesday partly as a debater, partly as a representative of British policy towards the neutral Governments. As a debater he made the most of the figures which had just been issued; and he repeated much that he has said before concerning the difficulty of reconciling fairness to neutrals with our own military necessities. He warned the critics of the Government not to make the mistake with regard to blockade which they made with regard to contraband—namely, not to suppose that there is any real virtue in the word, or any practical solvent of our difficulties. Happily this warning is not quite so necessary as Sir E. Grey, with a rather bitter experience of how words come to be shouted aloud, seemed to imagine. Most intelligent people know that blockade is not really a policy, but a legal term. Whatever method or term be employed, our difficulty remains the same—the difficulty of discriminating between neutral and enemy trade. The establishing of a formal blockade or cordon of ships would not in the least affect this main problem. We should still, after arrest and examination, be faced with the problem as to whether certain cargoes or portions of certain cargoes were really going to be consumed in Holland or Denmark or whether they were going to Holland or Denmark to be passed on to Germany or to replace stores which had previously been passed on to Germany. The only practical difference which would be made by establishing a blockade would be, not that we should stop more goods entering Germany, but that we should confiscate more goods in neutral ships. This would irritate neutrals without damaging Germany. The technical merits of blockade *versus* the present system are better left to the Government.

A far more important part of Sir E. Grey's speech than his answer to critics was his concluding warning to the neutral Powers—more particularly to the United States. There has never been so emphatic and clear a statement of the Allied claim, as belligerents with a sea supremacy, to stop all trade that can be identified and discovered as trade destined for or proceeding from the enemy. All such trade, wherever traced and visible, will absolutely be stopped. This, of course, is a flat challenge to the American Note. Accession to the demands of the American Note would allow whole masses of suspected trade to pass to the enemy, and this the British Government cannot and will not allow. Great Britain reserves the right to carry out in the best possible fashion the unimpaired programme laid down by Mr. Asquith last March. As to the neutrals, what we ask of them is that they will help us to distinguish between *bona-fide* trade and masked trade with the enemy: "If the answer is that we are not entitled to do that or to attempt to prevent trade through the neutral countries to the enemy, then I must say definitely that, if neutral countries were to take that line, it is a departure from neutrality".

There is evidence in this speech of Sir E. Grey that the temper of the Government has hardened. The farfical figures are not so farfical but that they indicate the need for tightening further the grip of the British Fleet upon the masked commerce of Germany. It may come yet to a strict and inexorable rationing of neutral markets. This will undoubtedly cause further inconvenience and loss to the great neutral traders. But war must needs close as well as open markets, and a belligerent cannot consent to be paralysed in its mightiest arm in order that the plenty of peace added to the profits of war may be enjoyed by



those who are happily out of the fighting. It is unfortunate that the spectator nations should be inconvenienced, but we may reasonably hope that these nations will admit the fair right of a fighting nation to prevent her enemy if she can from adding to his strength. Nothing Great Britain has done would have been omitted by any Power fighting for its life. Our errors do not lie in the direction of severity. They have lain—and must not continue to lie—in the direction of an over-nice respect for documents.

#### OUR FIRST ARM.

**M**R. BALFOUR, questioned by Mr. Wing in the House of Commons on Wednesday, sped an arrow of his peculiar irony at the story of the 17-inch gun. The originators of it—the story, not the gun—seem to have overlooked the truth that it is not necessarily any more good to put a very heavy gun on a ship than to put a very heavy ship on a gun: otherwise, why not make 34-inch guns instead of 17-inch ones? However, the incident has its uses if it helps to direct the public attention to the whole question of the Navy—if, by the talk it has caused, it helps to impress on people the supreme necessity to this country of being quite pre-eminent in ship and gun power. We must never take this for granted and go to sleep in the matter and trouble nothing more about it. On the contrary, we must always be alive and wide-awake to it; and in all our considerations of the war as a whole we must attach the first importance to the Navy, because without its pre-eminence, without, virtually, an unassailable naval superiority over our enemies, we end at once, and the struggle between ourselves with the Allies against Germany is decided then in favour of Germany. We end, and the Empire ends, if we fail in overwhelming ship and gun power.

The attention of the public is concentrated, naturally enough, to-day, and will be still more to-morrow, on the struggle of the armies in France and in the East; and the Military Service Bill and Compulsion, at length secured in part, are in everyone's thoughts now. How exceedingly important these matters are will certainly not be questioned by anyone who has followed and agreed at all with the line of this REVIEW during the last fifteen or sixteen months. But English people must never forget that the Navy of sheer necessity comes first, and always must so long as our nation exists. Otherwise they lose their balance completely.

Had we believed for a moment that obligatory military service would endanger the future of the Navy—a statement which the No-Conscriptionists were never tired of making in peace time—we should have declared and persisted, Allies or no Allies, not in favour but dead against obligatory military service. If it really endangered the Navy by threatening to deny to that Service the necessary reserve of man strength, as the Blue Water school was fond at one time of saying, obligatory military service would be suicide. But, of course, it does nothing of the kind; and to-day even the No-Conscriptionists seem to have dropped that line of argument as being played out.

We hope and believe that there is no danger whatever of overlooking the Navy in the immense preparations which the country is now making, and the sacrifices she is steeling herself to, in regard to the land campaign this next spring and summer. If we felt or thought otherwise we should be forced to regard its gigantic participation in the Continental land campaign as a wild-cat adventure.

The supreme duty Great Britain owes to herself and to her Allies is to keep the Fleet invincible; that long has been, is to-day, and must remain the A B C of any great war in which the country engaged; and we are sure that all statesmen of knowledge and judgment among our Allies fully recognise and agree with this.

## THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (No. 78), BY VIEILLE MOUSTACHE.  
MESOPOTAMIA.

**A**PIECE of wise foresight in peace policy which dictated the substitution of oil fuel for coal for use in the British Navy has involved the British Empire in a trial at arms which has assumed a serious aspect. Some eighteen months ago the perfect peace and friendship which existed between the British and the Turkish Government in the regions of the Persian Gulf and in lower Mesopotamia promised a reign of harmony for many years. The machinations of our foe the German ruled otherwise. A hit at our sea power could be made indirectly by means of bribery and intrigue through an attempt to destroy one of the main sources of the motive power of our Navy; and the German, ever on the look out for a hostile purpose that promised success, saw his opportunity. Underhand plotting had early enlisted the sympathy of the Turks to the side of the Central Powers. Bribery succeeded in driving the Arab tribe that guarded the pipe line of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company into revolt, and it early became evident that armed force in the lower waters of the Delta of Mesopotamia would be a necessity to save both oil and British prestige. It is well to have a mental picture of the geography of this region, for the confusion of riverways which have each played a part in the story of the campaign in Mesopotamia is not conducive to grasping a correct appreciation of the military narrative. The oil wells, it must be known, are in Persian territory, situated in the region of Ahwaz, on the large river Karun. This river, which rises in the south-eastern slopes of Middle Persia, runs in a southerly direction into the river Shatt-el-Arab; and the pipe line, which is some hundred miles in length, opens at Abadan on this latter river. The Shatt-el-Arab is formed by the junction of the great rivers Tigris and Euphrates, and from the point of junction at Kurna it flows in a mighty stream for a length of some 120 miles into the Persian Gulf at Fao. The Empire of Persia, decadent as it may be, could, if politically exploited in an earnest, vigorous manner, unquestionably play a useful rôle in the interests of the Allied Powers. Our Ally Russia exercises a powerful influence in its northern sphere which German intrigue will find a difficulty in subverting. The enemy, however, appear to have been allowed to get a start of Great Britain in the southern area. The situation created by enemy propaganda will call for active measures. The prestige of a victory on the banks of the Tigris would decide a hesitating populace, but a defeat would spell serious consequences.

The entry of Turkey into the alliance with the Central Empires demanded action with a view of clearing the enemy out of lower Mesopotamia. It was early realised that the task would necessitate somewhat widely divergent operations. The factor of time was all-important, and an organisation that entailed combined naval and military co-operation of a high order was imperative for success.

A brief outline of the operations may be of interest. A landing at Fao in the face of opposition which was speedily overcome enabled the commander to form his first sea base. Thence the combined forces sailed up to Basra on the Shatt-el-Arab, where the main base of operations for the expedition has been formed. Minor actions with combined naval and military forces against the retreating Turks had taken place on the river journey north. From Basra a divergent operation up the river Karun to Ahwaz was directed with a view of assuring the safety of the oil pipes. Basra, which was occupied by our forces on 25 November 1914, has been a magnet for both Arab and Turkish arms. Severe engagements took place to the west of the town at Shaiba and Burgisch, and the enemy, driven out of the latter place, fled to the north in disorder across the desert to Nasir-yeih, on the Tigris. The tidings of victory or defeat travel with mysterious speed in the East. The disaster to the enemy at Burgisch settled the matter of opposi-

tion to our arms at Ahwaz, 120 miles away to the east; and our detached force, after dealing with the refractory Arab tribes responsible for the safety of the oil pipe, was directed to operate across country to the west in view of joining the main advance in its progress up the river Tigris. The successes hitherto recorded have not been cheaply earned, but the resistance has been put up by forces of an indeterminate character. Masses of unorganised Arab tribesmen, owing only a nominal allegiance to the Turk, figure in such contests as opportunists. They are out for plunder, and are indifferent to which side they devote these pursuits. The Turks, defeated by our forces at Burgisch, were ruthlessly discomfited in their retreat across the deserts in their attempt to reach the Euphrates. Masses of wounded and stragglers were murdered and plundered by these robber allies.

A well organised combined naval and military effort carried our arms by river transport to Kurna, at the important junction of the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates. This town was captured with its garrison on 31 May. The pursuit was followed up to Amara, 75 miles up the river Tigris, which town surrendered on 3 June 1915. Many valuable steamers and barges had been captured on this successful journey up stream, in addition to guns and numerous prisoners.

Political necessity inclined to the idea of completing the task of occupying the entire vilayet of Basra. To effect this it was desirable to move a force up the river Euphrates as far as Nasiriyeh. This entailed a third dispersion of effort in the scheme of operations. After untold difficulties and under conditions of temperature which sound positively appalling, the troops were called upon for extraordinary exertions. The splendid handling of the river craft enabled the force detailed for the purpose to reach the vicinity of Nasiriyeh about 8 June. The low state of the water, the damp and feverish climate, the struggles in forcing channels through dams purposely erected, the intense heat by day—these trials piled one upon the other had told a tale upon the numerical strength of this Euphrates Expedition. A halt was necessitated to await reinforcement before resuming the offensive. On 24 July the attempt on the enemy's defensive position at Nasiriyeh was made, and the success was complete. The hostile lines lay on both banks of the Euphrates, the flanks resting upon marshes. A reconnaissance had disclosed that the positions on the left bank were somewhat in advance of those on the other. To engage and seize the defences on the left bank would therefore imperil the security of the garrisons on the opposite shore. A concentration of gun fire of intensity enabled the infantry to advance and carry the left positions of the enemy in a manner worthy of the highest praise and in accordance with all the principles and practices of manœuvre warfare. With the occupation of Nasiriyeh and Amara the hold upon the richest province of Mesopotamia became practically complete. The political effect could not fail to be far reaching. That an attempt to re-establish Turkish prestige and moral would be made under German guidance was, however, certain. As the Turk was driven back both on the lines of the Tigris and of the Euphrates he would gain in strength as he fell back upon reserves and reinforcements. Per contra, as the pursuing forces advanced they would lose in striking power at every step unless speedily and adequately strengthened in numbers. It was a period for a decision of great import.

It is as well to glance briefly at the physical difficulties which a campaign in Mesopotamia can present, independent of the climatic trials which the extremes of heat and cold demand. A uniformly flat plain through which courses two main gigantic rivers, both carrying waters of enormous volume, can change its normal physical aspect at the will of successive floods. Visitors to the plains of the Punjab will recall the lengthy and costly iron bridges that have been erected to span the several fine streams that give name to the rich province. The trouble is not to keep these bridges

in order, but to control the bed of the waterway in order to ensure that the rising torrent shall flow beneath the spans of the structures. The courses of the two rivers of Mesopotamia, both of them rivalling in magnitude India's greatest waterways, flow uncontrolled in any way. We read in the sparse communiqués with which we are favoured from that battlefield of the rise of 4 ft. more or less of the Tigris. A change of a few inches can suffice to flood thousands of square miles. A web-like scene formed by tributaries and old-time canals presents itself. Some deep, some sluggish, some rapid, some marshy, a maze of treacherous obstacles present themselves to military operations. We have struck a bad year for floods this winter season. Water has complicated the movement of troops at this period as much as the want of it took its toll of life in the trying desert operations of the past summer. Such natural difficulties to contend with, as well as an enemy well armed, well led, well trained and directed by the best of war intellects, demand exceptional capacity in leadership, in numbers, in moral and in energy to overcome. Above all the glamour of prestige hovers in the balance. This is a factor in Eastern warfare upon which may depend the foundations of an Empire.

We have not been thus far favoured with despatches from our military chiefs on the operations which have carried our arms beyond the confines of the vilayet of Basra. War operations that are undertaken in the Eastern sphere of our Empire are usually left in the hands of the Government of India, which has all the means for the purpose at its disposal, provided it be not robbed of these means for more pressing objects. The political department of the Indian Government is quite capable of dealing with neighbouring questions, provided sufficient force is placed at its disposal for the purpose. India, unfortunately, has been called upon to serve two masters. The weak policy of the rulers of Great Britain that declined to ask of its citizens the duty of training to arms for the defence of hearth and home has forced upon India the military necessity of finding men and arms for this purpose. Great Britain is now reaping the whirlwind. The splendid divisions brought from our Eastern dependency to fight our battles in Flanders would have made short work of the campaign in Mesopotamia had they had the opportunity. Our hope is that they may yet retrieve a situation which a significant error in both political and military strategy has imposed upon us. But it may entail an entirely new campaign.

The confession of responsibility for the policy of extending the operations in Mesopotamia beyond the vilayet of Basra has been accepted by the Government of Great Britain. The prosecution of an offensive against the Turks in any sphere where contact could be maintained would undoubtedly lead to an alleviation of the situation where the main effort against Turkey was being made—viz., the peninsula of Gallipoli. Failure, however, at the Dardanelles would unquestionably react against the forces in their efforts in the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates. The weakened army in the plains of Mesopotamia was directed to move forward by one single route, that of the river Tigris in the direction of Baghdad. It is as well to note the particular dates in the calendar when these movements were undertaken. With the spirit begotten of victory the Army pushed on to Kut-el-Amara, where on 28 September they drove the Turks out of a strong position after a very severe struggle. Still further impoverished in numbers by this victory, the small column—which, as we know, totalled but one division—was privileged to fight another great battle at Ctesiphon, only 18 miles from the walls of Baghdad. On 22 November the contest raged for many hours, but the cost of victory forbade a triumph.

It is as well at this point to gauge the importance of how a strategic mind can read the import of victory or defeat. The setback to our arms in Mesopotamia does not date from the failure on 22 November 1915 at Ctesiphon. It dates from the defeat to our arms at Suvla Bay on 6 August. While wavering minds were hesitating whether to continue the struggle on the



peninsula or to withdraw, the directing War Council of Turkey, in German hands, read the situation with a clear perception. The weeks spent in indecision by our strategists was the opportunity that German Turkey required. The 7th Army was, immediately after Suvla, transported to the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates. We know the rest.

## SPECIAL ARTICLE.

### STATE CONTROL OF INVESTMENTS.

By ARTHUR A. BAUMANN.

"The control of the investment of capital by the State is a startling innovation, but surely not an unsound principle."—Lord Milner at Leeds University, 24 January 1916.

**L**ORD MILNER has a knack of throwing a philosophic cast over the most practical observations. When I say a knack I do not, of course, mean a trick, or rhetorical device, for Lord Milner is one of the few public men who consistently and persistently apply reason to politics. I merely mean that Lord Milner's style is so impressive that he sometimes awes his listeners or readers into accepting doubtful propositions, of which the sentence quoted above seems to me to be one. The control of the investment of capital by anyone but its owners is certainly a startling innovation: but on what grounds does Lord Milner throw the ægis of his authority over the principle? To me the interference of the State with a man's investment of his capital seems to be one of the most mischievous and dangerous of all the acts of bureaucratic tyranny to which in the hurry and stress of a great war we have submitted. The investment of money is a science and an art which is studied and practised by a considerable number of men, with varying degrees of success, in the richest city in the world. This Lord Milner knows very well, being a director of several banks and large companies—indeed he is himself a professional investor of capital. To say that the control of investments by the State is not an unsound principle is tantamount to asserting that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or the Treasury Clerks, or a committee appointed by the Treasury, know more about investments than the professional investors, of whom Lord Milner is one of the most experienced and successful. With all respect, this strikes me as a paradox. But Lord Milner did not mean that: the report of his speech at Leeds is very condensed. He meant, I suppose, that during a great war the best means of gathering money into the war-chest is for the Government to lay hands on everybody's capital. Forced loans, like patriotic gifts, have very evil historical associations. A war must be financed, if it is to be financed soundly, out of the profits made by men in business, out of the interest on inherited or acquired capital, and out of annual savings of wages. The way to make those profits and interest and savings as large as possible is to allow men to trade as freely as possible, provided of course they do not hurt the Government or help the enemy. You cannot make the stream of national prosperity flow deeper and swifter by choking the tributaries which feed it. To stop men trading with the object of forcing the capital which feeds commerce into the coffers of the State is to my mind indistinguishable from a forced loan, and must in a short time produce bankruptcy. It is what Germany has done, and Germany is practically bankrupt, whatever the issue of the War. In Germany there is more justification for the commandeering of capital, because there is little or no possibility of investing capital in trade.

But the experiment of controlling the investment of capital from Whitehall began a year ago, and has been going on merrily up to date. In January 1915 the Treasury appointed a committee of five parliamentarians, with Lord St. Aldwyn in the chair, to regulate fresh issues of capital with a view to husbanding the resources of the nation. There was once a famous judge who said that "he never heard both sides of a case, because it confused him so". A similar fear of

mental perturbation seems to haunt Lord St. Aldwyn and his colleagues, for they refuse to hear the applicants for leave to make fresh issues of capital, forcing them to send in written statements, which are conveyed to the tribunal by the conduit-pipe of a young clerk, who practises the difficult art of *précis*-writing on complicated financial schemes. Some queer decisions have issued from this arbitrary and summary procedure; and when the decisions are so queer as to attract the notice of the Press or Parliament, the tribunal makes haste to disclaim all responsibility, protesting that it is not concerned with the financial soundness of schemes or the honesty of promoters. As a bank director Lord Milner must have heard of the refusal (subsequently converted into an acceptance) of the Barclay amalgamation; and he may have read about the welcome accorded to Mr. H. Lawson and his Blériot Company. Joint-stock companies propose fresh issues to pay off bank loans, to reconstruct a capital which does not represent assets, or to extend a prosperous business or capture a new trade. Is there any reason why the Treasury, acting by a committee, should stop business men from making these arrangements, except the notion that the Treasury is a better judge of what men should do with their money than the men who have made the money? Seeing that the committee has allowed various South American railways and the Pullman Car Company to make issues, while refusing the applications of companies operating at home, it is inevitable that men should murmur, and ask, On what principle are these decisions based? Is it occult influence? Or is it caprice? Or is it the disinclination which all Parliamentary Committees exhibit to listen to anything which does not touch on party politics? Last spring the committee refused permission to the issue of debentures for the purpose of erecting zinc smelting works in Australia, the famine in spelter being one of the most disastrous results of the War. Before I can agree with Lord Milner that the State control of investments is not unsound in principle, I must be convinced that the financial situation is far worse than on the best evidence it is held to be. If we have really arrived at the necessity of a forced loan, it would be better to say so. And then let a tribunal be set up to decide in what cases men shall be allowed to manage their own business, and in what cases they shall not; but a tribunal not composed of politicians who will not stay to hear, but of men who are in touch with the City of to-day and who will patiently investigate each case upon its merits.

## MIDDLE ARTICLES.

### THE PASSING OF A POET: LIEUT. OXLAND. SUVLA BAY, 9 AUGUST 1915.

**I**N the SATURDAY REVIEW of 28 March 1914 were printed some verses entitled "The Secret of the Hills", the final lines of which pleased, we think, a good many readers, to a few perhaps even recalling the mountain calm of Wordsworth:

"But freedom and enlightenment  
Are not for such as we;  
The hills preserve inscrutable  
Their ancient mystery."

The verses were anonymous, the author being "intensely reserved and modest", doubtful of his gift, and apparently only choosing to confide it entirely to one friend—at whose suggestion "The Secret of the Hills" was sent to the SATURDAY REVIEW. But now there can be no harm in saying that the author was Lieutenant Oxland, who obtained his commission in the 6th Battalion Border Regiment in August 1914, sailed with his regiment for the Dardanelles in June 1915, and was killed in an attack at Suvla Bay on 9 August. "Oxland, with a handful of men", wrote

a brother officer, "was far in advance of the regiment. He attempted to cross a gully, but, finding it impossible to do so, he retired, waiting for reinforcements. Orders came to retreat still further, and in doing so Oxland was shot in the chest and died almost immediately."

A poet passed in him if one may judge by some of the lines which have been shown us by a Cambridge friend of his, and by his swan song, "Outward Bound", published in the "Times" of 27 August 1915:

"Though the high gods smite and slay us,  
Though we come not whence we go,  
As the host of Menelaus  
Came there many years ago;  
Yet the selfsame wind shall bear us  
From the same departing-place  
Out across the Gulf of Saros  
And the peaks of Samothrace.  
We shall pass in summer weather,  
We shall come at eventide,  
Where the fells stand up together  
And all quiet things abide;  
Mixt with cloud and wind and river,  
Sun distilled in dew and rain,  
One with Cumberland for ever,  
We shall go not forth again."

Cumberland, and Oxford—he had just completed his third year there when the war broke out, and he joined the O.T.C. at Churn Camp—and R. L. Stevenson seem equally to have inspired him. His lines glow with a generous enthusiasm for them. "He took R. L. Stevenson as his master. In poetry he largely experimented in parody, in lyrics and light verse; but his best work was that in which he expressed his deep love for the wild beauty of the Cumberland fells and for the 'dreaming spires' of Oxford. . . . Most of his poems were written in letters and on scraps of paper, sometimes as we walked over the Cumberland fells. The poem 'Outward Bound' was enclosed in the last letter he ever wrote to me, written two or three days before he was killed."

Like Julian Grenfell, Lieutenant Oxland was an all-round 'Varsity man. He took Honours in Classics at Mods and was reading for History in his final school, and rejoiced in athletic sports, especially in football, which brought him in close touch with his men. Among those "inheritors of unfulfilled renown" in life and poesy whom the war has robbed and will rob England of we shall well include the author of these few scattered verses.

#### SIR CHARLES STANFORD AND "THE CRITIC."

By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

WHEN is an opera not an opera? This riddle, not to be found in the jest-books of old time, remains to be proved and solved by some future humorist who is also a musician. After Friday of last week my answer might have been, "When it is Sir Charles Stanford's version of Sheridan's 'Critic'". But such an answer has none of the world-comprehensiveness appropriate to the dignity of the true Riddle; and, besides, the Shade of Socrates wandering past might murmur: "Friend, that being so, and Stanford's 'Critic' evidently, in your estimate, no opera, what in the name of Zeus is it?" I should have to say I don't know. I don't know now; seven days have brought me no succour in the shape of a man who knows, or even says or thinks he knows. Now,

a rose by any other, etc. But I wish to give an opinion on the new "Critic", and the why and wherefore of that opinion; and to be unable to define what I am talking about is a melancholy hindrance at the outset. I can write concerning a symphony or quartet, just as an art-critic can write of a picture. With symphony or quartet there is no danger of my terms being misunderstood; an art-critic would not have to explain that perhaps the particular oil-painting he meant to criticise is not in oils, is perhaps a statuette or a new design for a flying-machine. The title "opera" was given by Richard Strauss to his sad hash of the "Bourgeois Gentilhomme", and I have my suspicions that Stanford got a hint or two from that deplorable abortion. The reader must approach the new work without prejudices. Nothing quite like it has been seen on the stage before. I waive my right to judge it simply as it is described by the official—"Opera, in Two Acts"; and I begin my account of the whole matter by telling, roughly, in crude outline, what we had put before us on Friday week.

On the stage a picture more or less resembling, in the muddle and litter of odds-and-ends, one of Hogarth's plates—one, for instance, from "Marriage à la Mode". Rather to the left, the Critic, Mr. Sneer, the Author, Mr. Puff, and others. On either side boxes containing mainly ladies with head-dresses like church-towers, these same ladies impersonating the fashionable audience of other days. In front of the stage nothing particular until the conductor appears: Mr. Eugene Goosens, jun., in some sort of eighteenth-century garb. So here, obviously, we were to have, first, a central play; a secondary play of the audience as conceived by Sheridan; and a tertiary play conceived only by Sir Charles Stanford and his artistic and philosophic admirers. For, let us remember what Sheridan did in "The Critic". He displaced the ordinary stage-loungers of the day to make way for actors, and, excepting that these perhaps talked a little less, the galleryite of 1780 might easily have taken the actors for gentlemen. But we were asked at the Shaftesbury last week to accept not only them, but the persons in the stage boxes and the scene-shifters, and the conductor in a most ridiculous get-up, as the equivalent of things visible to the eyes of our forefathers one hundred and thirty years ago. The intention of creating the eighteenth-century feeling, atmosphere, and colour, I admit, was commendable; but on how muddle-headed a plan was it carried out. By way of making us feel ourselves thoroughly at home in the eighteenth century we, in our prosaic twentieth-century attire, had eighteenth-century mimes pressed against our very knees. My friend, Mr. Dolmetsch, at his concerts of old music, has taken to masquerading in the suit worn by Punch on the day he married Judy; and this tomfoolery, far from intensifying the old-world atmosphere of his concerts, has simply destroyed the charm they once possessed. So with the proceedings of the mummies in "The Critic". Instead of being drawn nearer to the eighteenth century, we are repelled back into the latest hours of our own time.

Now, the reader probably knows the story of "The Critic" better than I do. I have never seen it mounted, either in antediluvian or decent horsehair Victorian style, or in the style affected by Messrs. Granville Barker and Gordon Craig, or in any other style. But we know that in one scene of "Hamlet" there is a play within a play: and that, as in the villainous version of "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme" alluded to, the play within the play may, for musical (so-called) purposes, be spread out far beyond the limits of the play without, so Sheridan with a view to his "asides" let everything else go hang and worked up a long-drawn-out series of outrageous side-splitting scenes in his outer play. The inner play, however, so far as I can make out, is Sir Charles Stanford's "opera". Here, again, I am sternly checked by the word "opera". This fantasia of Sheridan's, this phantasmagoria of sheer fun, boyishness, perversity, malice and the rest—what on earth has it all to do with opera? What can it



prove but a hindrance to the opera? Yet this could not be cut out if anything at all was to be left of Sheridan, whose drama is worked out by Snee, Puff, Dangle and Co. In the inside play there is no real drama, nothing but extravaganza. Is it part of the bad luck of the Academic that when he comes courting popular favour he generally tumbles over the doormat? Sir Charles has had so many helpers in his design, all of them, it appears, celebrated men, that it is hard to understand how he came to bungle so badly here. It is also characteristic of the Academic that he professes extreme regard for accepted masterpieces, and would on no account mangle them. Therefore the paper's have assured us daily that few alterations, and those of no importance, have been made in Sheridan's satire. Yet one of the apologists says: "One very crucial character, however, has had to be sacrificed, that of Sir Fretful Plagiarist, who, indeed, was the original pivot of the satire". Artemus Ward spoke of "Hamlet" with the part of Othello omitted; what would he say to the fate of the principal character in "The Critic"?

On the whole, as I discuss the new production, it begins to grow clear to me that it is a "revue". No detail is lacking; nothing too serious is forced in. It is full of costume display; some ladies in charmingly flimsy and very brief skirts skip about gracefully. It is packed from beginning to end with topical (musical) allusions to the War and the Army and the Navy. Sir Charles Stanford has employed the medley as an excuse for a string of patriotic pieces and manifestations of his humour. Most of the music is neither good nor bad; it serves. One or two rather good melodies make their appearance and melt away, leaving us longing for some more of that sort of thing. But humour, it seems, has the paramount claim, and it smothers all else. The particular kind of humour is caviare to the lay palate. There is not much really funny music in existence; Wagner infused a little laughter into the music of "The Mastersingers", but the stage "business" is responsible for most of it. And there is a story about a monkey that saw its master shaving and tried to do likewise, with disastrous results. The fable has many applications. Sir Charles' humour lies in what I have just called his "topical (musical) allusions", and this variety may appeal to some minds. But constant quotations from the great masters are not in themselves mirth provoking. Occasionally they are witty, but even then one may doubt whether one person in a hundred is qualified to see the point. Quotations from his own works seem to me, if I may be excused for saying so, quite senseless; for his music possesses no marked individuality by which it can be recognised, and many of his pieces are altogether unknown. There is another point. Sheridan didn't like professors, and whenever Sir Charles had won a small laugh by a musical sally Sheridan revenged himself by a quip from one of his characters that set the house in a spontaneous roar.

#### BRITISH CROWD-UNITS AND THEIR DANGER.

By WALTER SHAW SPARROW.

SOMEONE has said of the insular Briton that every Englishman is an island. There is too much praise in this witty thought. If your average Englishman—or native of Great Britain—were nothing worse than a simple island he would receive visitors from abroad, would entertain them intelligently, and would be glad to receive from them every fact that should be of use to him in his own affairs. Then he would be an island progressively in touch with Continental experience. The sea would not cut him off from rival men who are organised into opponent crowd-units called nations. He and his own crowd-unit or nation would feel in their daily life the pressure of a great many influences coming from other countries to add the perils of continents to the crowd dangers of a sheltered land. Your average Englishman feels no

such thing as a rule. He dwells as a conceited anchorite on an island, and misuses the security won for him and kept for him by a perfect Navy. He toys with fads while the world's drama goes on across the seas. Even during a long war, when his habitual egoism is attacked by daily horrors and sorrows, he fails to see that his passion for compromise and shilly-shally, for too much jaw and too many comedian half-measures, keeps victory at a distance and adds hourly to the killed and wounded.

In other words, the average Englishman in peace and in war is "insulated", and I use this word "insulated" as it is employed by bacteriologists. To insulate a microbe from others of different species and to let it multiply into millions of millions; to learn what can be learnt about its growth and about its busy life in a disease—all this attracts a man of science; but it is equally interesting to cultivate a mixture of four or five different microbes and to see what action they have on one another. The Englishman is insulated in the simpler manner: it is his pride at home always to be solitary with his own breed, always to keep his mind aloof from other peoples, though some of these take the most envious interest both in him and in the far-scattered Empire to which he belongs. Foreigners are amazed by his lack of imagination, by his anchorite illusions and vanities, by his tough mind and his echoing tongue, that never tires of repeating the same things about the same derelict fads or the same untravelled party politics.

Great Britain is looked upon by foreigners as a beautiful theatre where political farces are acted all the year round, and where few experts in the arts of make-believe ever know how ludicrous they are to strangers. For the whole population is not only insular, but insulated—an anchorite of vast multitude dwelling on a safe island, and therefore free from the common sense that dangerous frontiers would impose on silliness. Hence in the pre-war times the British attitude to German warnings—an attitude so comically brainless that it turned our social politics into a wild burlesque. Or, again, take the British attitude to the War. After declining for ten years to raise troops enough to meet a danger advertised by Germany, the British people, as soon as they declared war, began to improvise huge armies by means so haphazard, so capricious and so unjust that neither the War Office nor the Government could count on getting a continuous supply of men always large enough for the cumulative needs of the battle-policy.

But the most noteworthy thing of all in our insulated ways of life belongs to the perils of crowd psychology. It explains why the British Isles, with their four perverse nationalities, all equally far off from the world's drama, have been—and are likely to remain—constant dangers to themselves and to the rest of Europe. Three accepted axioms in crowd psychology run as follows:

1. That all crowds moved by differing aims tend to mutual hostility, and that the hostility proceeds not from leaders but from the crowds themselves;
2. That the most highly organised crowd-units are nations; and
3. That the mutual hostility which in ordinary times is latent between competitive nations becomes especially dangerous when one nation of a group loses touch with the perils of a latent hostility, and declines to keep the balance of military power that puts a check on aggressive alliances.

During a hundred years at least the British Isles have been a peril to Europe, because they have refused to recognise military war as always latent in the competition between great nations. Wishing to be safe in their islands and to live waywardly in insulated go-as-you-please, they have paid—not without much grumbling—for an efficient Navy; but our naval power, however vast and perfect, cannot preserve on the Continent the equilibrium of military strength, and this fact is a great weakness in all diplomacy. So our islands ought to have had two defences—a navy to

safeguard their trade routes and their civil populations, and an army big enough to put their Continental friends on an equality with hostile alliances. For many years this need has been evident to impartial onlookers, but our insulated people have refused to see it—with consequences which have been reaped in full since August 1914. In 1864, despite a treaty engagement, our anchorite selfishness looked on while Denmark was humiliated; and in 1870 it played the part of a neutral tradesman.

Meantime, three perilous things have happened in our domestic affairs:

1. The growth of Labour, in organisation, in passionate egoism, in determined militancy, has become a crowd-unit so powerful that it threatens the greatest overcrowd or system of social laws. It is by far the most crassly insulated civil force in our hermit nation, and fights continually for its own hand. Its conscription is so formidable that already it has deranged the social equipoise of our complex society. This huge force, shut up with an old civilisation in a guarded island, is a permanent menace to all the other classes; for it is hand-labour in a system of bellicose army corps, while brain-labour is so individualistic that it goes its own way like a system of streams and rivers. British Labour needs what it will not get—the close discipline of dangerous frontiers. Perhaps it may be held in check by a fear of air navies. Can anything less than fear control its vanity?

2. The menace of Labour has been increased by the fact that the conservatism of agriculture has waned while the forces of industrialism have grown stronger and stronger and more selfish. Nothing is more amazing than the non-morality of modernised trade. That a neutral should earn wealth by feeding the armies that ravaged Belgium is regarded as natural in a profit and loss account. "D— this war! I can't get any German glass!" is the reported saying of an English shopkeeper, who as a private man is loyal enough, we may be sure. War teaches many things, and it tells us all to be on our guard against the demoralisation that the crowd-spirit of industrialism brings about.

3. The newspaper press has developed a wonderful competition in which strong appeals to the social crowd-units called political parties have become habitual. Even in this time of war little is done without the aid of journalistic high pressure. In fact, each political party in our insulated realm is organised mainly by newspapers, whose methods add to our national life a sort of chronic fever called by different party names. To-day this fever is called by five names: Labour, Conscription, Voluntarism, National Unity and Confound the Government! Insulated politics, playing the fool in our secure islands, beget weak statesmen, who find it hard to learn from a divided Press which fever of opinion has affected the largest number of electors. Labour alone brings figures, plus an alliance between three of its powerful crowd-units—the Miners' Federation, the National Union of Railwaymen, and the Transport Workers' Federation.

Whether the methods of the Press do more harm than good is a question which has been debated many a time during the past thirty years. But such debates are useless. A nation gets from all her most popular servants just what she wants to receive. Neither Lord Roberts nor his journalist followers weakened the insulated humbug and illusion by which the people were possessed. And islanders who feel quite safe from outside dangers will always listen to those who in a time of peace prattle to them partly about their security and partly about their phases of zealotry. After the present war, as after Waterloo, after the Crimea, and after the South African danger, our sheltered country will concern herself once more with her insulated ideas and social crises. Considered as a great crowd-unit among European nations, she is incomplete and perilous; for it is only in a time of war, and then with great difficulty, that she understands the mutual antagonism of rival crowd-units.

## IN TIME OF

### "THE BREAKING OF NATIONS."

BY THOMAS HARDY.

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#### I.

ONLY a man harrowing clods  
In a slow silent walk  
With an old horse that stumbles and nods  
Half asleep as they stalk.

#### II.

Only thin smoke without flame  
From the heaps of couch grass:  
—Yet this will go on just the same  
Though dynasties pass.

#### III.

Yonder a maid and her wight  
Come whispering by;  
War's annals will fade into night  
Ere their story die.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### HOW TO SHORTEN THE WAR.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Chelsea,

January 1916.

SIR,—Captain Pretymann's remarks as to the "unpleasant" duty of dealing with German trades and traders were not well chosen; but there can be no doubt that the excessive difficulty in carrying out such a measure will be most unpleasant, seeing that many of the so-called alien firms involve a large number of British interests and have British partners.

It seems to me clear that, after the War, we must, if we are worthy of the name of British, rigorously exclude the admission of Germans and Austrians to these islands, and above all make it penal to employ them; and further it is essential that no more German business houses or firms should be established among us. The stringent dealing with the firms already here will not shorten the war. What will do so, and what ere now in all probability would have brought it to an end, is that the blockade of Germany should be real and not a sham, as heretofore, and this can be done, and will be done, if the Navy is not throttled by diplomatists and politicians. One can only judge by results, and can one find a single instance in which diplomacy against Germany has not been an utter failure and led to the prolongation of the War? Napoleon, the greatest of all leaders of men, made it a rule that diplomacy should be bottled up when the sword was once drawn; instead of that, our Navy has never been given a free hand; and after eighteen months of war we find goods innumerable going into Germany through the co-operation of neutrals.

The question arises, Did the Government know or not know that the blockade, so highly puffed in the House of Commons, was futile and ineffective? Was their knowledge kept from the people, who have received little enlightenment from their rulers since the War



began? Germany respects no laws either of God or man, and such a nation cannot be conquered by any other means but her own. Those futile frauds, the Declaration of London and the Hague Convention, of which I trust we shall hear no more, only tended to curtail our command of the sea, which is the very breath of our nostrils; and yet a British Minister has suggested that the freedom of the sea might be a question for discussion! Britannia rules the waves, and no enemies nor politicians are going to be allowed to dispute this. The way to shorten and bring this war to an end is to let Britannia rule the waves and to allow those who are the cause of her ruling the waves to have a free hand in stopping all goods from reaching Germany, and in that case, as Nelson and our sea power crushed the power of Napoleon, so will our magnificent Navy of to-day throttle the arrogant Kaiser and restore peace to the world.

Your obedient servant,  
ALFRED TURNER.

#### THE MUZZLED SEA-DOG.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

24 January 1916.

SIR,—Nothing for many months has heartened soldiers more than the news that the Government has at last decided to tighten up its measures against the masked trade of Germany. They refused to be disheartened by the lack of men and munitions. They knew the difficulties consequent on the country's unpreparedness; and they knew that every effort would be made to surmount them. Even Gallipoli they looked on as just the fortune of war. It is easy to be wise after the event; but they knew that in the beginning soldiers and sailors on the spot believed that the enterprise would succeed; and that, if it had succeeded, the consequences would have been tremendous. Little would have been heard then of centres of gravity in the West and subsidiary operations in the East. They resented many things: the attacks on Lord Kitchener, the antics of the "anti-conscriptionists", the windy talk in Parliament. But these things did not dishearten them. They knew their fellow-countrymen and felt that the heart of the nation was sound.

What did dishearten them was the feeling that the Navy, much against her will, was, for reasons they could not understand, not being allowed to help the Army to the fullest extent of her sea-power; and that consideration for neutrals was being allowed to interfere unduly with military necessity; the feeling, in fine, that while our gallant fellows in the trenches, at the cost of losses unparalleled in our history, were dealing sledge-hammer blows at one gate of Germany, our Government were letting in at another gate supplies and munitions of war that rendered all their heroic efforts vain.

Your obedient servant,  
A SOLDIER.

#### LIONS AND ASSES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

94, Park Street,  
Grosvenor Square, W.,  
24 January 1916.

SIR,—In a recent issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW there was a stirring letter by Sir Alfred Turner headed "Lions and Asses". With the heading itself and the body of the letter most thoughtful readers would find themselves in hearty agreement; but when one reached the last paragraphs one was rather at a loss to find out which was "lions" and which was "asses". To divide mankind in general and the British public in particular into two categories, "lions" and "asses", is certainly an easy way to solve many questions. The only thing that may prove awkward is the knowledge "which is which". To mistake "lions" for "asses" and vice versa would be very much like jumping from the frying-pan into the

fire as soon as the former had become a trifle hot. So that on the whole the categories "lions" and "asses" will not help us much, unless we are certain "which is which".

Sir Alfred Turner proposed that Mr. Lloyd George should be made Prime Minister in place of Mr. Asquith. A more lame and impotent conclusion to an ambitious premiss it would be impossible to conceive. Fortunately, however, in the same issue as the "Lions and Asses" letter was an editorial dealing with the Ministry of Munitions, and analysing the personality of Mr. Lloyd George.

Let us leave "lions" and "asses" on one side, and take men as they really are. What do we find? A medley of good and bad qualities in general, with, in certain cases, a prominent development of features which make individuals emerge from the crowd for a longer or a shorter period. To stand out of the crowd at all may appear to some to be in itself a sign of real greatness. But that is a false assumption, for the standing out in full publicity may be due to the fact that the prominent person merely reflects and re-echoes the predominant thoughts around him. In other words, he is a sensitive—what the spiritualists term a "medium"—responsive to the thought-atmosphere around him. When this quality is predominant the judgment is generally very much in abeyance. It is the quality of "judgment" which leadership imperatively demands.

Mr. Lloyd George is certainly a "sensitive" of a high order, for he reflects and expresses very glibly the thoughts of the circle in which he moves. In former days he expressed the yearning of the budding democracy to create by Act of Parliament a brand new order of things; now he feels instinctively that the nation is not quite satisfied with its politicians, and without ado he gives it willing tongue. What Mr. Lloyd George and his adherents fail to perceive is that he condemns himself exactly the same as he condemns the others.

If the country has been "too late", did Mr. Lloyd George lift a finger in protest and in warning before the psychological moment when the man in the street had that feeling pretty strongly, whereupon it was easy to reflect it and echo it in glib accents? Did Mr. George warn the country beforehand against the possibility of a great war? Did he warn the country against shortage of munitions *before, not after*, it was "too late"?

These, not to mention other questions that might be put, show that for the present at all events the Premiership had better remain *in statu quo*.

Yours, etc.,  
ARTHUR LOVELL.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Gulfsborough Hall, Northampton,  
12 January 1916.

SIR,—The splendid and spirited letter from Major-General Sir Alfred Turner on lions and asses has suggested to me that the German Emperor to-day is in a similar position as that diverting old pagan, Lucius Apuleius, in "The Golden Ass". Like Lucius, he, too, has wished to turn into a puissant and all-wise bird, but he has been rubbed down with the wrong ointment and has been metamorphosed into an ass, ramping over the globe in search of the antidote to restore him to his former human level.

Yours faithfully,  
REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.

#### THE MONTENEGRIN DAGGER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

94, Boundary Road, N.W.

SIR,—No wonder the first news we heard from Montenegro was contradicted a few hours later. We were told that the hereditary weapons of the Men of the Black Moun-

tains were to be given up along with cannon and trash of that sort, but no one who knew his Balkan peninsula believed that for a moment. The Montenegrin will give up his sheepskin coat, his ration of rye bread and kid's flesh, his hut on the mountain side, his wife herself if need be, but never while he lives will he part with his knife, dagger, dirk, poniard, scimitar, djerrid, yataghan, call them what you will. He mostly has one of each in the rainbow sash which curls round his splendid form. Was it not with this knife that his great-grandfather killed the Greek who did him wrong, and with it that another ancestor finished off an Armenian, not to speak of those half-dozen Bulgarians, whom, helped by one other compatriot only, he wiped out in continuation of a feud of who shall say how many generations? Each inch of that beloved weapon could tell its own tale of grim vengeance, and it is not to be given up at the first bidding of a Hun. Can we not at least save heroic Montenegro out of the Balkan Hades?

Truly yours,

C. SUTCLIFFE MARRIOTT.

### THE KAISER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

San Francisco, California, U.S.A.

SIR,—The German Kaiser has deliberately broken faith and treaty; he has consented to the barbarous murder of innumerable non-combatants; he has burned and entirely destroyed two ancient historical and beautiful cities; he has decorated and complimented the cruel and cowardly assassin who callously drowned 1,500 innocent people; he has countenanced and supported the brutal military murder of a defenceless and solitary English lady; his agents are to-day on trial for organising murderous outrages in the United States of America; and now, as a concluding crime—as a final abominable outrage and blasphemous insult to Heaven—this same identical Kaiser informs us that he is “asking for the assistance of God”.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

BERTRAND SHADWELL.

### ORCHESTRAL CONDUCTORS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have just read your musical critic's interesting letter on this subject, and would point out for his comfort that it has been more than once suggested that the wielder of the bâton should be put behind a screen. Why not?

Yours, etc.,

MANFRED FISHER.

### “SOME ERRORS OF MACAULAY”.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

24 January 1916.

SIR,—In reply to Mr. F. F. Montague, may I state that in the Madras Presidency (in which Arcot is situated), the liquid remaining after boiled rice is removed is called in Hindustani “Kanji”, and is used as starch by the “dhoby” or washerman. The solitary cells of a native regiment (I speak of 20 years ago) were called the “Kanji-house”, as an offender who received this punishment was—or was supposed to be—fed entirely on “kanji” during his incarceration, which could not exceed seven days. A paternal Government would hardly have allowed this had most of the nutriment been known to remain in the rice, so that Macaulay's sepoy's proposal was perhaps not quite so altruistic as it appears at first sight.

Yours obediently,

W.

## REVIEWS.

### A BAYARD OF OUR TIME.

“The Life of Field-Marshal Sir George White.” By Sir Mortimer Durand. Blackwood. 2 Vols. 30s. net.

“HE was one of the most chivalrous men I ever knew.” This is the judgment of Lord Roberts—the old friend and chief to whom White owed so much in recognition and praise. It was this quality of chivalry which independently suggested itself to Sir Mortimer Durand as the ground bass of White's whole character. As we look through these pages we find at every turn the two principal ingredients of chivalry—courage and humanity. White was as brave as a lion, and it was the bravery of a Bayard—a lustrous emulation in prowess, a readiness to dare and to rejoice in the daring of his friends. Even at Ladysmith, though there he had ceased to be the “forward” soldier of Charasia, White still stood in the eye of history as an heroic figure. His answer to Buller's notorious telegram of surrender has a golden ring: “Will not think of making terms till I am forced to. . . . We must not yet think of it.”

At first it seemed that White would have very little chance of proving his quality. As a subaltern he was ordered to India just as the Crimean War broke out; and he went to his Indian station as miserable a young officer as could be found in any mess. Naturally he hated India straightaway, hated it at that time with a steady, grousing hate which fills to overflowing his first letters to England. White felt about the Crimea what most eligible young men feel about this present war: “A man who has not been to the Crimea will be a nobody all the days of his life”. The despair of twenty summers was soon outlived, though White's bad fortune held true for some time. He was in India right through the Mutiny without a single opportunity of showing fight. It was his lot to be in the quiet station at Fort Attock. He had moved thither from his former station at Sealkote, where, had he remained, he would have had a fair chance of closing his military career for good. But at Fort Attock, in 1857, despite the Mutiny, White is still able to grumble: “We don't see much variety”. Twenty years later he was still a spectator of other men's battles; and in 1879, when the Afghan campaign seemed at an end save for a few formalities, White was still an unfledged soldier. He was then forty years of age.

But his fortunes were now at the turn. Henceforth he was to be a fighting man. Charasia, Burma, and South Africa were before him. His military career was assured from the moment in which he scrawled the message to Roberts: “I have taken possession of the pass, and the 92nd have all the Afghan guns”. This achievement was ascribed by Roberts in his despatches to “White's military instincts and, at one supreme moment, his extreme personal gallantry”. White's letters to his wife brightly illuminate his conduct of the campaign. “I thought these orders rot (orders from Baker, afterwards overridden by Roberts), so put them in my pocket. . . . At another place I borrowed a soldier's rifle and cleared a nest of them out by regularly stalking the leader like an ibex.”

The rest of the campaign of '79 illustrates White's dislike of a siege—a fact extremely curious to remember in the light of Ladysmith. The next characteristic passage of his life occurred in 1880, when he was Military Secretary at Simla, under Lord Ripon, and news arrived of the requisition of the 92nd for more trouble in Afghanistan. White at once offered to resign his post so that he might go with his regiment. Ripon declined his resignation, giving him leave with the words: “I took you because you were a good soldier, and I don't want to spoil you”. White writes to Camperdown: “I hope you will not think that I have acted wrongly in leaving Lord R. now, but will realise what my feeling and position would be if 400 of the 92nd—like the 66th—were to be cut up and I a military secretary at Simla”. Thus White was enabled to share in the great march to



Kandahar, and be again recommended by his chief for the V.C.

The campaigns in the Sudan and Burma illustrate that other side of White's chivalry—his sense of fairness to all, and his solicitude for those who trusted to the protection of the British flag. In the Sudan he was out of the fighting; but he had responsible staff work to do, and was given the medal at the close. The notable thing is his outburst of generous indignation at the evacuation. He writes to his wife: "The movement about to commence next week will probably result in the massacre of many of those who have been fools enough to believe our word plighted by Lord Wolseley that we would not give them up again". To his brother he writes: "Perhaps the very cursedest, cowardliest and falsest abandonment ever made is that your humble servant is now aiding in".

We see even further into White's generous temper during the pacification of Burma. To the professional soldier the dacoits were thieving banditti, to be rooted out and punished with all their accomplices. But White shows in his letters to Lockhart a certain sympathy with the dacoit's point of view—the sort of sympathy boys feel for the outlaws of Sherwood Forest. The dacoits were bold fellows—the heroes of all Burmese tales of gallantry. Dacoity, moreover, was a terrible name to the peaceful villages. White thought it unfair to punish the Burmese at large for their forced complicity with the banditti. He writes to Lockhart: "The first duty of the conqueror is to protect the conquered. After leaving villagers at the mercy of dacoits, who take all they have, we reassert our power spasmodically, drive off the dacoits, and compensate the villagers for their losses by burning their villages".

The post of Commander-in-Chief in India was the gift of Lord Roberts. Roberts and White had been closely in touch all through the most critical work in Afghanistan, and Roberts's regard for White was the natural sympathy of two gallant men. Roberts had seen the spark in White—the quality which gave to both these men a glamour apart from their soldiership. The post was not suited to White's gifts and temper. He never liked staff work or administration. Even in the thick of the campaign in Egypt he sprang alert at the chance, offered a moment but quickly withdrawn, of more active service at Quetta. Moreover, he never really got over his early distaste for India. It is impossible to find in his letters any really close observation or understanding of the Indians. He kept himself, partly from shyness, to the society where he was easily accepted. Readers of his letters home must not too hastily assume from their frank and boisterous tone that White was naturally accessible. He was a "forward" soldier in the field at Charasia; but he was not forward in society, with the natives, or with his own men. His own men at Ladysmith called him "invisible White". His sympathy and kindness for his soldiers, for the deserted natives of Egypt and the victims of dacoity, did not carry with it an impulsive address. There was in it nothing of Napoleon's marvellous sympathy with the soldier—a sympathy based on the strictest discipline which yet allowed of a friendly jest or slap. Napoleon was able to shoot his soldiers or prod them familiarly in the stomach, as occasion called. White was too humane for the one proceeding and too shy for the other.

The post of Commander-in-Chief is best regarded as an interlude between Burma and South Africa. It is here that we part company with Sir Mortimer Durand. Certainly for soldiers who need the inspiration of chivalry White is indeed a model; but it would be fatal if our young leaders should be taught to regard the tactical paralysis of Ladysmith as a great lesson in war.

Sir Mortimer Durand, thanks to many letters not hitherto published, explains to us more clearly than has hitherto been possible White's motives in shutting himself up in Ladysmith. Sir Mortimer has no doubt of the absolute rightness and wisdom of this step. Thereby, he holds, White saved Natal. White's idea

was to hold and contain as many troops as possible around Ladysmith, and so to stop the sweep of the enemy towards the sea. His task was to gain time for the ships upon the seas, and the only practicable way that suggested itself to White was to hold Ladysmith. In White's view Ladysmith was the shield of Natal: "I was confident of holding out at Ladysmith as long as might be necessary, and I saw clearly that as long as I maintained myself there I could occupy the great mass of the Boer armies and prevent them sending more than small flying columns south of the Tugela".

This reasoning is all the more perilous for its appearance of being scientific and reasonable. The plain truth as to Ladysmith is that White, after unwisely splitting his force at the start between Ladysmith and Talana, afterwards virtually abandoned the field. His "forward" rôle would have been to keep his forces active behind the Tugela. But first he divided his force, next he shut up his force, and thenceforward failed to co-operate actively with the relieving armies.

It will be noted even by those who accept White's own view of the position that an important part of this plan, continual sortie and worrying of the enemy, tended to drop out of the programme. Possibly one reason of this subsequent inertia is to be found in the disaster of 30 October, when Carleton was obliged to surrender his entire force. The effect of this blow upon White, not in very good health, was terrible. He writes to his wife: "I think after this venture the men will lose confidence in me, and that I ought to be superseded". Paradoxically this blow for the soldier was to the immortal credit of the man. He at once took the sole odium of the whole affair. "I framed the plan, and am alone responsible. No blame whatever attaches to the troops." But White naturally found no comfort in his own generosity. He was overwhelmed, and it is clear that his future movements were affected by this initial disaster. He made no more plans for a sortie. The sortie of December, 1899, was urged by Colonel—now General Sir William—Knox—a soldier who chafed continually in the jaws of the trap. Sir William Knox had designed the defences of Ladysmith, but he was the last soldier in the world to think of them as a schoolboy thinks of his "bounds".

As to the later operations for relief, White and Buller were never really in touch. Temperament had as much to do with it as difficulty of communications. Almost all that Buller writes at this time has an underlying soreness. He expected White to do more, whereas White waited in an exasperated patience for relief. Buller never let White know enough of what he was about; and up to the last White was working in the twilight. There was no real co-operation.

This brings us to the most conspicuous action of White's career—his refusal to surrender Ladysmith at the instance of Buller. Here White, for the last time in his life, stood out in his character of the Bayard. Of the quality of this act not a soldier or statesman in the Empire had a doubt. White knew what Ladysmith meant for British prestige—more especially in the East. His ignoring of Buller's suggestion for the surrender of Ladysmith was a fitting episode in the active and gallant career which had begun with the pocketing of Baker's order at Charasia.

#### THE ROUNDHEAD SON.

"Royalist Father and Roundhead Son." By Cecilia Countess of Denbigh. Methuen. 12s. 6d. net.

IN our sympathies we are still Royalists and Roundheads prepared to defend with sword and pen the probity of our hero, be he Charles or Cromwell. And hence it is that none can arraign without rancour the principals in the great national quarrel of nearly three hundred years ago. Yet of the motives influencing action on one side or the other we are now little able to judge. The extraordinary psychological entangle-

ments that beset our way in searching for the truth in individuals keep the 17th century in "a grand unintelligibility". It has been conjectured that in the crisis of the Great Rebellion external circumstances forced all but the most simple souls out of their natural orbits, constraining them to swerve towards the purpose of a reformation.

England was in need of a supreme catharsis. She was become corrupt—was sick unto death. A Puritan prophecy cried abroad that "there will never be an Order in this Land till there be a Disorder". A Royalist poet, singing of "smooth seasons" past, mourned that the national body needed to be "let blood" as a human cachectic body to the very point of dismemberment.

"Sick is the Land to th' heart and must endure

More dangerous faintings by her des'prate cure."

Then at that crisis must the simple, clear-seeing souls, either men or women, have possessed a very definite value for the community at large, supplying as they did an element of balance and sobriety in an angry, frightened, despairing, suffering world. The ardent yet even-souled Royalists, parents of a Roundhead son, were of such a fibre. Lady Denbigh's book had carried welcome were it only for her contributions to our scanty knowledge of the Fielding family. In particular the light is timely that is thrown on Susan Fielding, since, despite her close friendship with Charles and Henrietta, she has received but little notice in chronicles of the time or after. She owned great beauty of character. Yet this was not her title to honour, but her nearness in blood to George Villiers. Any person or family connected with his "sweet Steenie and Gossip" might be sure of the countenance of King James. Moreover, the favourite was as eager to ask favours as the King was delighted to grant them, and it was one of his best characteristics that he had a real love and care for his own kindred. Therefore he procured for his brother-in-law Fielding, at the time when he himself was created Duke of Buckingham, the title of Earl of Denbigh. "It affords a curious proof of Buckingham's pride", observes the author, that one of the principal reasons of the title being given was that Denbigh had married the favourite's sister. Had James but known the life-long, self-sacrificing services that that sister would render to "Baby Charles", and Charles's unhappy consort, he had blessed the instrumentality, paltry or noble, that caused the patent to be bestowed.

It is, however, the "Roundhead Son" that is the central figure in this interesting book. Basil Fielding appears, here, of the melancholic, "enthusiastic" temperament that was too common in his age. It is not easy to apprehend such natures. Kind he was by instinct; yet of a cold, self-willed humour, discontented, secretive, elusive. Those who truly loved him could scarce have claimed that they understood him. All through he seems to have lived at the will of his temperamental discontent. In Lord Carlisle's suite in Paris, at the time of the French marriage negotiations, he first appears—a lad of 16—the prey of his own self-preoccupation. "Your son", writes his tutor to the Earl, "is rather discontented than pleased and delighted with his stay here in Compiègne, and continual attendance on my Lord of Carlisle, notwithstanding that his Lordship and my Lord of Kensington use him respectfully and nobly . . . as also (but here the tutor is agreeing) he fears that late dinners and suppers may in the end offer an assault to his health." Many years later, in 1638, when Basil was Ambassador Extraordinary to Savoy, we seem to be regarding once more the pettish youth of the days in Compiègne. "Lord Fielding", reports the Duke of Savoy in writing to the English Secretary of State, "did ever show a discontent since coming into that territory . . . he disliked his entertainment and lodging and did not consider himself respected as became the Ambassador of so great a King."

In reviewing the events of his life it seems probable that no greater or less motive than an overmastering spirit of discontent led Lord Fielding to defect from

the King; notwithstanding that the ruler to whom he had sworn fealty had used him "respectably and nobly", creating him, for example, Viscount, Master of the Robes, Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Knight of the Bath, and Knight of the Garter. At the time, however, when the irreconcilable nature of the aims of King and Parliament was becoming entirely manifest—when, as Carlyle noted, the whole world was getting on fire with episcopal anti-episcopal emotion—the son of William and of Susan Denbigh left Royalist and put on Roundhead. Now the most affecting letters in the book are written by the deeply tried and afflicted yet ever forbearing mother to remind her son of his duty to his "Master and dread Sovereign" and of the "many obligations you and your best friends have to the King and Queen". Again she implores: "If you will believe me, as I am a tender and loving mother, it is time for you to run to the King upon your knees and crave his pardon". Forgive, such a mother would, every possible fault a son should commit, even to that with which his sister roundly charges him, "a loss of honour"; yet, seeing the strength and vitality of her royalist convictions, is it possible to conceive that she would ever have been brought to accept any "vindication" or "justification" of his open revolt against their liege lord and common benefactor?

In meditating upon the actors in that past tragedy of the English nation, it is consoling to believe that "their . . . wickedness was not *they*, was but the heavy and unmanageable environment that lay round them against which they fought unprevailing". Basil Fielding's defection was, in such view, no more "deliberate" than the King's "sacrifice" of Strafford. Only the driving of destiny was deliberate, unswerving; her instruments they were that acted and agonised for the common good, walking, priests and victims, oppressors and oppressed, with even steps toward an appointed goal.

#### "LA PRIMA DONNA DEL MONDO."

"Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua." By Julia Cartwright (Mrs. Ady). 2 Vols. Murray. 12s. net.

ISABELLA D'ESTE is no longer the first lady of the world, but she remains in history as a charming figure, whose personality adds to the Renaissance an art beyond art, a life of flawed nobility as attractive as a masterpiece. Isabella's good lot was to live from 1474 to 1539, and to keep through these sixty-five years a youthful ability. But it is strange that she should be remembered to-day because of herself, because of her complex character, for she took the greatest possible pains to be remembered by the work she did as a patron of the arts and of learning. What she valued most was not the flawed masterpiece of life that her mixed qualities composed; it was the concrete—and therefore the perishable—legacy that her fine taste collected. Her descendants saw money in her art treasures and sold many of them to foreign princes—the merit of a creative time being finance to vulgar periods. Then, ninety years after Isabella's death, the Germans looted Mantua, and what they failed to do as destroyers of her villas and palaces was done by the French invaders of 1797, who did not spare even the tomb that held the ashes of Isabella d'Este.

Since then she has been a great woman in history, the rest of her legacy being either dispersed or destroyed. And it is worth noting that not even the portraits of her that great men delighted to do—the drawing by Leonardo da Vinci, the portrait medal by Cristoforo Romano, and the picture by Titian in the Imperial Museum at Vienna—satisfy her devotees, who no more need a likeness of her than they need a likeness of Helen.

Who can say how many men have wished to write the biography of Isabella d'Este? Armand Baschet intended to be her biographer, but his work was cut short by death; and Charles Yriarte hoped to achieve



what Baschet had failed to do, but death came to him after he had written some entertaining chapters which were published in "La Gazette des Beaux Arts". Canonico Willelmo Braghirolli would have written a life of Isabella had he lived long enough; he was greatly attracted by the subject, and published many letters from Isabella relating to Perugino and to Giovanni Bellini. Other scholars have prepared the way for a biographer, publishing studies on the Gonzaga princes or on other aspects of a superabundant theme; and two distinguished Italians, Alessandro Luzio and Rodolfo Renier, fifteen years ago, promised to put their knowledge into a monograph on Isabella. They had studied her life, they knew her letters, numbering more than two thousand, and they possessed the essential chivalry as well as the necessary facts; but their monograph has not yet appeared.

So it has fallen to the lot of an English lady to write the life of Isabella d'Este. As far back as 1899 Mrs. Ady published a book on Isabella's sister, Beatrice d'Este, Duchess of Milan, and she did justice there to both princesses during the six years of Beatrice's married life; so that the present work continues and brings to completion a study of the Renaissance begun more than seventeen years ago. Mrs. Ady has retained throughout her career that passion for the Renaissance which was active in England during many years of Victoria's reign, and particularly in the seventies and eighties. When W. E. Henley was editing "The Magazine of Art" he said to a young writer: "So you wish to send me an article? Very well. But it must not treat of the Renaissance. All these drawers of mine are filled with papers on the Renaissance. An editor has a hard life." But a reaction came. Modernity passed through *plein air* into the Impressionists, and to-day there are Futurists of several sorts who would make the old masters into bonfires only they have sense enough to fear the law. How comic are the whimsies of excess in the wayward fashions that "art" assumes!

Mrs. Ady, in following the studies that she likes best, writes always *con amore*, so she is unaffected by the changes of vogue in taste and in zeal. She writes history with art and art with history, and is always as modest as she is thorough and sincere. She tells her readers that these new volumes do not form an exhaustive biography; but they are rich and ripe: we need nothing more. Their readers soon perceive that Mrs. Ady draws two Isabellas, both true to life, and that one of them does harm to the other. This Isabella is a stateswoman who understands an unscrupulous age and who follows in her diplomacy a guile like that of Machiavelli. She asks Caesar Borgia for the statues of which he has robbed her brother-in-law, and she dances at the ball given by Louis XII., while her old friend and kinsman, Duke Ludovico, is shut up in the dungeons of Loches. "Like others of her age, she knows no regrets and feels no remorse, but lives wholly in the present, throwing herself with all the might of her strong vitality into the business or enjoyment of the hour, forgetful of the past and careless of the future." But her guile is a weapon, and it saves "the little State of Mantua from falling a prey to the ambitious designs of Caesar Borgia, or the vengeance of two powerful French monarchs, Louis XII. and Francis I."

As rose trees have a right to wear their thorns, so Isabella had a right to wear some of the strategic cunning and heartlessness that the tragedy of Italian life employed in her days. She needed a duplex character to save her little State from such miseries of war as came to her kinsfolk at Urbino, or from such sack and siege as she beheld in 1527 in Rome. The plague alone was war enough. Once it took 2,000 persons from her city and its suburbs, reducing the population to such wretchedness that Isabella pledged her jewels. The expenses of the epidemic cost the Government 140,000 ducats. Isabella "battled bravely with this new calamity, and exerted herself with her wonted energy to found charitable institutions and to relieve the distress of her husband's subjects".

Mrs. Ady understands the history she relates. But she prefers the artist in Isabella, the artist and the patron of art. So do we, and this part of the biography will be read by most persons with the greatest interest. In chapter xix., vol. i., for example, there is a very good account of the battle she fought against the artist temperament of Giovanni Bellini. In 1501, through a famous connoisseur named Michele Vianello, she asked Bellini to paint for her a *fantasia* to match the allegories of Mantegna. Bellini accepted the commission, partly for Isabella's sake and partly because he loved Vianello. But he had many other works on hand, and the new picture would take him a long time, perhaps a year and a half. "As to the price," wrote Vianello, "he asks 150 ducats, but may reduce it to 100." After several interviews Bellini promised to do the work for 100 ducats in a year's time. "He will set to work as soon as possible," said Vianello, "and I hope you may have the picture in a little over a year. He promises to take the greatest pains, and begs you to send him 25 ducats, and hopes to begin the work directly after the holidays." The 25 ducats were sent on 25 June, but Bellini had lost touch with the subject of the picture, which he did not like. So Isabella made concessions in the matter of the subject; but the painter had no love for antique stories or fables. More than a year went by, and Bellini had not yet made a beginning. Isabella wished the 25 ducats to be returned, and then she asked for a picture of the Nativity, for which she would pay 50 ducats. Many other troubles followed, till at last—it was 10 April 1504—Isabella declared that she could no longer bear such villainy as Giovanni Bellini had shown towards her. She tried to set the law in motion against him, but Bellini refused to return the money. Instead, he finished the picture—and delighted his patroness. Many a painter has found that a commission destroys his zest in a picture to be done.

#### THE PRIVATE PARKS OF ENGLAND.

"Moor Park, Rickmansworth." A Series of Photographs by Alvin Langdon Coburn. With an Introduction by Lady Ebury. Elkin Mathews. 5s. net.

IT is a long time since we have seen a more charming picture book than this, and we hope that Mr. Coburn and his publisher will follow out their good idea by illustrating all the great private parks of England. To do full justice to this idea will be an act of originality, for English private parks, with their ancestral gardens and houses and scenery, have been neglected by the makers of books. There is not a big private park without a varied charm of its own: each is a natural museum where some fine aspects of unmodernised England find peace in a home of good breeding. Bradgate Park is a school for landscape painters and a joy to historians; Cowdray, despite its golf bunkers and greens, remains a symbol of old-time Sussex, a woodland county in brief. There are several years of work for Mr. Coburn to enjoy. He has made an excellent beginning at Moor Park, in Hertfordshire. His twenty photographs are large enough to be effective; they are very well "seen" and very well printed. Perhaps they are somewhat too domestic, perhaps they linger too much in and near the house; we should like just one photograph more to show the parkland itself in a noble mood of light and shadow. Plate xvi., entitled "Deer", certainly takes us into the park, but the background is closed with a beautiful cluster of trees; and long wide views in parks are as necessary as in politics.

The introduction by Lady Ebury puts a great deal of history into four happy pages. We learn that Moor Park, the Manor of the Moor, was bestowed on the Monastery of St. Albans by Offa, King of Mercia, whose famous dyke dates from about 779. The first tenants held this Manor of St. Alban's Abbey. The park was enclosed in 1460 by George Nevil, younger brother of Richard, Earl of Warwick, to whom it had

been granted by Henry VI. Edward IV. took it away from George Nevill, and Henry VIII. gave it to John Vere, Earl of Oxford, who passed it on to Cardinal Wolsey. In 1577 Queen Elizabeth presented Moor Park to Francis Russell, second Earl of Bedford, and the property was held by the Russell family till 1613, when it reverted to James I., who, in 1617, gave it to the third Earl of Bedford, whose wife, Lucy, was very friendly with the Queen. It was this lady who planned the beautiful gardens that Sir William Temple praised as the best that he had ever seen either at home or abroad. Yet Lucy, Countess of Bedford, sold Moor Park in 1626 to the Earl of Pembroke, who, in 1639, sold it to the second Earl of Monmouth.

Lady Ebury dwells on other vicissitudes, till, at last, Moor Park was purchased by Mr. Benjamin Hoskin Styles, who entered upon his reign in 1720. With the help of Leoni, an Italian architect, Mr. Styles transformed a fine old Tudor house into a Renaissance mansion. "In fact", says Lady Ebury, "the decorations and arrangements of the interior remind one more of a Genoese palace than of an English country house".

"After Mr. Styles's death the place changed hands frequently, having been the property of Admiral Lord Anson and of many others. In 1828 it came into the possession of the Grosvenor family, when it was purchased by the first Marquess of Westminster. Lord Westminster died in 1845. On the death of his widow in 1846 his youngest son, Lord Robert Grosvenor, afterwards created Lord Ebury, inherited the estate. He died at the age of ninety-two, in 1893, and was succeeded by his eldest son, the present Lord Ebury."

"Universal Pronouncing Dictionary of Biography and Mythology." Lippincott. 42s.

This fine dictionary is now thirty years old, and this is the fourth edition. It was praised in its younger years by Oliver Wendell Holmes, and since that time it has not changed its quality. It has only grown larger and more complete. It brings universal biography up to the date of the Great War in recording Lord Kitchener's appointment in 1914. It covers every period and race, including the heroes and the gods. It gives briefly, with a wise discretion, the leading facts concerning all its people, and—a special feature—it enables you to pronounce their names aright, whether these names be Sanskrit, Welsh, Aramaic, or any dead or living tongue. It is introduced with a scholarly essay upon pronunciation which makes it quite impossible for the inquirer to go wrong. This is undoubtedly a most useful book to have; and it is made to last—firmly bound in half morocco. This book will "endure handling," and it will also repay it.

The "Atlantic Monthly."

We are glad that the "Atlantic Monthly" (1s. net) is in future to have an English edition and that Mr. Dent will issue it from Aldine House. The January number is just out. It is a most interesting number, and is printed with the fine taste we always expect in the Aldine books and other publications. Particularly we notice an important, even an illuminating, article on "Social Aspects of Drink", by John Koren, which treats the question in a thoroughly sane and useful manner. We hope to have an opportunity of discussing this article, for it deals thoughtfully with the question of Drink and Crime—a question which has been obscured by unscientific general statements and clamour. But there are plenty of other fresh and interesting articles besides this; among the authors being W. J. Ashley, J. W. Headlam, J. D. Rockefeller, Junior, Mr. Laurence Binyon, and Mr. Masfield. The better educated and more generous Americans are entirely and unreservedly in favour of the Allies, as we have contended from the start of the war: there is not the smallest doubt about this. But there is, of course, a large and virulent pro-German element in the States; and besides them there is the great bulk of the Americans who are decidedly neutral—that is, they do not desire or intend war if they can possibly avoid it. We hope the "Atlantic Monthly" will throw in its lot wholly with the distinct and absolute pro-Ally section of Americans—with the section voiced largely by Mr. Roosevelt.

## INSURANCE

### NON-PROFIT ASSURANCES IN FAVOUR.

**N**EARLY a dozen life offices have already issued preliminary statements giving brief particulars of their new business transactions in 1915, and from these it is safe to conclude that last year the percentage of assurances taken out without profits was unusually high—probably a record for the last half-century. Neither the total sum assured nor the amount of the new annual premium income obtained appears to have fallen off to any very considerable extent, except in a few special cases, and the result has been that the published figures have led to unsound assumptions. Because the totals have not altered to any very serious extent it is apparently supposed that business was in a fairly healthy condition during the twelve months. Unfortunately, the reverse was the fact, owing to a large proportion of the new premium income being comprised of extra premiums paid for war risks.

It is known, indeed, that the number of ordinary policies taken out last year was comparatively small, and also that the demand for participating assurances was less in evidence than for many years past, especially after the second war loan had been issued. Managements, as a matter of fact, generally anticipated that this would prove the case, and practically all new policies offered throughout the year were devoid of the investment feature, which had formerly proved so attractive. It seems probable, indeed, that similar conditions will obtain until the outlook for bonuses is more assured. Most offices, even those which had specialised in with-profit contracts, are now endeavouring to attract patronage by quoting exceptionally low rates for non-participating policies, and in one instance the offer is most tempting, being only possible owing to the great rise in interest rates.

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